

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7884

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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 00277

EXDIS

AF:REPEAT AS REQUIRED

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, UK, AO, OAU

SUBJECT: SCHAUFLE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE BRITISH

SUMMARY: SEVERAL AREAS OF DIFFERENCE EMERGED IN ASSISTANT SECRETARY SCHAUFLE'S DISCUSSIONS ON ANGOLA WITH HIS BRITISH COUNTERPARTS AT THE FOREIGN OFFICE: A) BRITISH BELIEVE SOUTH AFRICAN WITHDRAWAL FROM ANQOLA MUST BE A PRECONDITION TO OVERALL FOREIGN WITHDRAWAL AND A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT; B) BRITISH BELIEVE PROLONGED FIGHTING INCREASES MPLA'S RELIANCE ON THE SOVIETS AND THAT AN END TO THE FIGHTING WILL SOON END MPLA'S DEPENDENCE; C) BRITISH DO NOT SHARE, AT LEAST TO THE SAME DEGREE, OUR CONCERN FOR THE EFFECTS OF SOVIET INVOLVEMENT ON OVERALL WESTERN SECURITY INTEPESTS. PARTICIPANTS AGREED ON THE DESIRABILITY AND GENERAL LANGUAGE OF A STATEMENT BY CALLAGHAN IN VIEW OF THE EC'S FAILURE TO COME UP WITH A JOINT DECLARATION. THEY ALSO AGREED ON THE NECESSITY FOR CLOSE COORDINATION AMONG THE AMERICAN, BRITISH, FRENCH, AND GERMAN AMBASSADORS IN ADDIS ABABA DURING THE OAU SUMMIT MEETING. END SUMMARY.

1. ON JANUARY 6, MR. SCHAUFLE MET AT THE FOREIGN OFFICE WITH MINISTER OF STATE DAVID ENNALS, DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE ANTONY DUFF, ASSISTANT UNDER SECRETARY OF SECRET

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STATE NORMAN ASPIN, AND MARTIN REID, HEAD OF THE CENTRAL

AND SOUTHERN AFRICA DEPARTMENT. SCHAUFLE BRIEFED THE BRITISH ON THE PURPOSES AND RESULTS OF HIS AFRICAN TRIP, EMPHASIZING IN PARTICULAR THE EFFORTS TO SHORE UP MODERATE AFRICAN OPINION PRIOR TO THE OAU SUMMIT. THE BRITISH COMMENTED ON THE OPTIMISTIC TONE OF THE REPORT. WHILE THEY AGREED TO THE NEED FOR A POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL CLIMATE, THEY BELIEVED THAT THOSE COUNTRIES VISITED BY SCHAUFLE WERE NOT REPRESENTATIVE OF AFRICAN OPINION AND THAT THE COURSE OF THAT OPINION WAS DECIDEDLY RUNNING TOWARDS THE MPLA.

2. THE CONVERSATION REPEATEDLY RETURNED TO THE POINT WHICH DIFFERENTIATED THE TWO SIDES THROUGHOUT THE DISCUSSIONS. THE BRITISH BELIEVE THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN DECISION TO INTERVENE IN ANGOLA HAS PROVEN A DISASTROUS MISTAKE; IT SETTLED NOTHING AND SERVED ONLY TO DRIVE AWAY THE MODERATE AFRICANS AND DISCREDIT UNITA. SOUTH AFRICAN PRESENCE INSIDE ANGOLA MAKES A POLITICAL SOLUTION ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO ACHIEVE. THE BRITISH ATTACH GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE EMOTIONAL CONTENT IN AFRICA OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN INCURSION. MOST AFRICANS, THEY SAID, WOULD PREFER TO SEE A SOVIET SATELLITE IN THE SOUTHWEST OF THE CONTINENT RATHER THAN A SOUTH AFRICAN-INSPIRED VICTORY. SOUTH AFRICAN WITHDRAWAL MUST BE A PRECONDITION TO THE COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL OF ALL FOREIGN FORCES.

3. SCHAUFLE REJOINED THAT IT MIGHT BE WISHFUL THINKING TO BELIEVE THAT A SOUTH AFRICAN WITHDRAWAL ALONE COULD CREATE THE NECESSARY CONDITIONS FOR A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT. MORE LIKELY, IT WOULD ENCOURAGE THE MPLA TO LOOK FOR MORE MILITARY SUCCESSES. IN ANY EVENT, THE SOUTH AFRICANS WOULD NOT WITHDRAW ENTIRELY FROM ANGOLA, LEAVING AT LEAST SOME FORCES AROUND THE CUNENE DAM. MOREOVER, THE DEPARTURE OF SOUTH AFRICAN REGULARS MIGHT TO SOME DEGREE BE COMPENSATED BY THE INTRODUCTION OF IRREGULAR OUTSIDERS. SCHAUFLE SAID IT WAS IMPERATIVE TO ACHIEVE A MILITARY SITUATION ON THE GROUND IN ANGOLA WHICH WOULD CONVINCE THE MPLA OF THE NECESSITY TO NEGOTIATE A POLITICAL SOLUTION. THE UNILATERAL WITHDRAWAL OF SOUTH AFRICA WOULD BE A STEP AWAY FROM THAT GOAL. A MILITARY SOLUTION
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MUST BE RULED OUT BEFORE A POLITICAL ONE CAN BE CONTEMPLATED.

4. THE BRITISH WERE NOT CONVINCED. THEY REPEATEDLY SAID THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN PRESENCE MAKES NEGOTIATIONS IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE MPLA, WHILE THE AMERICANS ANSWERED THAT A SOUTH AFRICAN EXIT, AT LEAST IN THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES MAKES NEGOTIATIONS UNNECESSARY FOR THE MPLA.

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5. A SECOND POINT, SPRINGING FROM THE FIRST, ON WHICH COMMON GROUND WAS SLIPPERY CONCERNED THE DURABILITY OF SOVIET INFLUENCE IN ANGOLA. THE BRITISH BELIEVE THAT ONCE THE FIGHTING IS OVER, AFRICAN NATIONALISM WILL RE-ASSERT ITSELF AND THAT THE SOVIETS WILL FIND THE MPLA UN-GRATEFUL HOSTS, MUCH AS THEY RAN INTO EGYPTIAN INDEPENDENCE AFTER THE 1973 WAR. THE BRITISH STRESSED THAT THE MORE PROLONGED THE FIGHTING IN ANGOLA THE MORE ATTACHED THE MPLA WILL BECOME TO THE SOVIETS, WHICH IS PRECISELY WHAT WE DO NOT WISH TO SEE. IT ONLY FOLLOWS THAT ANY STEPS TO ACHIEVE THIS END, INCLUDING A UNILATERAL SOUTH AFRICAN WITHDRAWAL, SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED. SCHAUFLE AGREED THAT AFRICAN INFLUENCES WILL EVENTUALLY BE DETERMINING IN ANGOLA, BUT SAID THAT THE LONG RUN CAN BE VERY LONG INDEED. EVEN IF THE CONVENTIONAL COMBAT CAME TO AN END WITHOUT A POLITICAL SOLUTION, ONE WOULD LIKELY SEE GUERRILLA ACTIVITY IN THE SOUTH AND A CONTINUED SOUTH AFRICAN PRESENCE AROUND THE CUNENE DAM. SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD PERPETUATE AND PERHAPS INCREASE MPLA RELIANCE ON SOVIET ASSISTANCE.

6. A FINAL POINT ON WHICH THERE WAS NOT COMPLETE AGREEMENT CENTERED ON THE US-SOVIET BILATERAL ASPECTS OF THE ANGOLAN CONFRONTATION. SCHAUFLE SAID WE ARE NOT OPPOSED

TO THE MPLA; WE CAN AND DO LIVE WITH MORE RADICAL REGIMES.
WE MUST, HOWEVER, OPPOSE A SOVIET IMPERIAL ADVENTURE
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THOUSANDS OF MILES FROM RUSSIA'S TRADITIONAL AREAS OF INTEREST WHICH AIMS TO IMPOSE A MINORITY REGIME ON AN INDEPENDENT NATION. THE BRITISH DID NOT TAKE UP THIS POINT, BUT NEITHER DID THEY SEEM COMFORTABLE WITH IT. THEY DO NOT SHARE THE PERCEPTION THAT THE SOVIET INVOLVEMENT IN ANGOLA -- OR A SIMILAR INVOLVEMENT ELSEWHERE -- NECESSARILY HAS A DIRECT LINK TO OVERALL WESTERN SECURITY INTERESTS.

7. SCHAUFLE AND THE BRITISH AGREED THAT THE FORTHCOMING OAU MEETING IS UNLIKELY TO ACCOMPLISH MUCH OF LASTING CONSEQUENCE. IT WILL NONETHELESS BE AN IMPORTANT BACKDROP TO SUBSEQUENT EFFORTS TO ARRANGE A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT. THEY AGREED THAT IT IS IMPORTANT FOR MODERATE LEADERS TO STAVE OFF AN MPLA BANDWAGON. THE BRITISH WILL INSTRUCT THEIR AMBASSADOR IN ADDIS ABABA TO COORDINATE CLOSELY WITH THE AMERICAN, FRENCH, AND BRITISH REPRESENTATIVES. SCHAUFLE SAID WE WOULD SEND SIMILAR INSTRUCTIONS.

8. THE BRITISH EXPLAINED THAT IN VIEW OF THE EC'S APPARENT INABILITY TO COME UP WITH A JOINT DECLARATION ON ANGOLA BECAUSE OF THE FRENCH BELIEF THAT SUCH A DECLARATION WOULD BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE, FOREIGN SECRETARY CALLAGHAN IS PLANNING A PUBLIC STATEMENT SOMETIME WITHIN THE NEXT COUPLE OF DAYS. THE STATEMENT WILL BE KEYED EITHER TO AN ANTICIPATED ANNOUNCEMENT BY SOUTH AFRICA THAT IT INTENDS TO WITHDRAW ITS FORCES OR TO THE OPENING OF THE OAU SUMMIT. IN EITHER CASE, CALLAGHAN WILL CALL FOR AN IMMEDIATE CEAQE-FIRE, THE WITHDRAWAL OF FOREIGN TROOPS, THE END OF FOREIGN SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT, AND A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT AMONG THE THREE PARTIES.

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